

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 181 017

SP 015 490

AUTHOR Borland, Glenn P.
TITLE LaPollette High School Student Vandalism
Committee.
PUB DATE [78]
NOTE 25p.
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Behavior Change; Cost Effectiveness; *Discipline
Policy; High School Students; Junior High School
Students; *Peer Influence; Program Development;
*Public Schools; *School Vandalism; Social Values;
*Student Attitudes; Student Behavior

ABSTRACT

The development of an anti-vandalism program based on the principle of an informed student population is described. Volunteer high school and junior high school students operate an educational program for children in the lower grades, using devices such as T-shirts, bumperstickers, lecture presentations and television vignettes. A reward system for information leading to the identification of vandals adds significantly to the effectiveness of the overall program. (LH)

ED181017

LAFOLLETTE HIGH SCHOOL

Madison, Wisconsin

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Glenn F. Borland

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

"Student Vandalism Committee"

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

By

Glenn F. Borland

Former Principal of LaFollette High School

Currently the Northeast District Director

For the Madison Metropolitan School District

SP015490

In 1975, the Madison Board of Education became very concerned about the increased cost of vandalism in the public schools. It was then that the Superintendent gave priority to the establishment of a vandalism project aimed at reducing the amount of vandalism through student involvement.

The Madison Metropolitan School District is divided into four Attendance Areas. Each Area includes one high school, several middle schools, and several elementary schools. One of these, the LaFollette Attendance Area, agreed to develop the project.

That summer, a group of eight LaFollette High School students were called together to develop plans. The main idea developed was that in order to attract student participation and involvement, it would be necessary to do some special things to point out to students the need to reduce vandalism and other law related violations. The student committee also recognized, or at least identified, vandalism as a community problem rather than just a school problem and that vandalism occurred for many reasons: drug and/or alcohol related activities; frustrations, dares, just fooling around, and the like.

Using vandalism as a focal point, the program was designed to correct some of the behavior and attitude problems that are prevalent in the schools today. The lack of values or direction, poor parental support, and negative peer pressure were all addressed.

Initially it was anticipated that there should be some type of group program developed to modify student behavior for those students actually involved in acts of vandalism. However, as the years progressed it was found that in most cases no common denominator could be found that characterized a "vandal." Consequently, plans for activities relating to behavior modification were instituted on an individual basis rather than on a large group basis.

The students divided the entire Vandalism Program into four different categories: 1) community communications; 2) student involvement activities; 3) cost analysis; and 4) behavior modification.

In October of 1975, a Law Day was developed. The entire population of nearly 2300 students at LaFollette High School was scheduled into a series of mini-sessions with over 90 citizen participants including lawyers, policemen, the Mayor, the Governor, insurance people and others. Each student's class schedule was adjusted by computer, and on October 15th each received a printed schedule outlining the Law Day activities. This was a very successful kickoff to the vandalism project!

In addition to the Law Day, the committee developed a one-half hour TV program which included a number of vignettes produced by students. They worked with teachers in terms of providing information for classroom use on such topics as respect for property, positive citizenship, positive self concept, parent involvement, and in gaining support for making special presentations to students. The student involvement activities, including community communications, were highlighted by student visitation teams. These student visitation teams were made up of students on the Vandalism Committee. They would go into elementary and middle schools to discuss vandalism with various age groups. The first year, second, fifth and eighth grades of the elementary and middle schools in the LaFollette Attendance Area were the grades visited. To do this, the high school students had to be willing to give a sufficient amount of time to this effort to meet with individual teachers at the elementary and middle school who were interested in having the students. They had to be prepared to attend a series of training sessions on a variety of presentation methods and become familiar with the activities that go into a visitation. This has become a very, very positive aspect of the program and as a result, the Committee has grown from eight students in 1975 to more than a hundred actively involved students in 1979.

There are now three subcommittees of the total Vandalism Committee. The Visitation Committee now plans the visitations to the elementary and middle schools. We have experienced, over the past three years, such success with the visitations that we are expanding the visitation teams to include units on drugs and alcohol. We have found that younger students will listen to older students. Whenever possible, students make their visitation to the elementary and middle school which they attended. This provides a situation where the high school students on the visitation teams might have brothers and sisters in the school, or might live in the neighborhood. It has been very effective.

Another subcommittee is the Media Committee which is responsible for making the vignettes and film strips. (There are plans underway now to make radio tapes relative to vandalism.) Students on this committee develop the total program for the vignettes in addition to writing the script. If there are people in the community involved, the students make those contacts and arrangements.

The third subcommittee is Special Projects. This group makes posters, bumper stickers, buttons, T-shirts and other items which are distributed by

the visitation teams, posted in the local schools or used in other ways.

Eighth graders are brought from feeder middle schools to LaFollette High School in the spring to tour the building, to see it in operation, to look at the various types of equipment, and to receive curriculum orientation. The Vandalism Committee takes part in new student orientation in order to promote good school citizenship and school pride.

The Vandalism Program is a practical one. It addresses philosophical behavior modification and value clarification. The ideas outlined here come from a philosophical behavior modification base. It is from this we attempt to curb the problem.

It is necessary, however, to deal with vandalism when it occurs. I like to use the example of the 55 mile-per-hour speed limit. People can be told the 55 mph speed limit saves energy, saves wear and tear on the car, and gets them where they are going just as fast as if they were driving 70; but the important fact is that if there is no enforcement in dealing with people who continually speed, before long all of the philosophical reasons are lost and people will not change their behavior. In 1976 we added the reward program to the Vandalism Project. We have found this a practical approach, and that it supports the philosophical base from which the Vandalism Program operates.

With a 2300 student population, there are always a few who are in trouble with the law outside of school. These students have little respect for school rules or school property. It takes time to relate to some of these students. In doing so, we try to point up their responsibilities. A considerable amount of time must be spent in the classroom talking about the responsibility students have in reporting vandalism at school. For example, one of the areas that certain students can identify with is cars. I have asked my students, "If I happen to see someone damaging your car and know who that person is, do I have a responsibility, other than my role as principal of the high school, to report that information?" Most students, if I'm talking about their car, will agree that the information should be reported! I have then made other analogies, asking students if they think they have a responsibility in reporting the incident if they see someone breaking a window or damaging paper holders in the restroom? It has taken, in some cases, as much as a half a year working with students in classes to convince them that they do have a responsibility!! It is interesting to note that since the reward system was implemented there has not been a major incident of vandalism that has not been reported and we have received restitution for almost all of the damage.

The Student Council cooperates with the Vandalism Committee to make the reward program work. The handling of students suspected of vandalizing is critical. Our students are not treated like criminals, although in some cases we have pressed charges. Because school vandalism is usually an internal matter, the reward system has proven very helpful to us in having other students turn vandals in. When they know that the chances of the vandal getting a police record because of it are very slight, they are more willing to turn them in. At LaFollette, absolutely no one is turned in to the police from inside tips even though some major acts of vandalism may occur, with substantial rewards offered. (There have been some schools and communities where the reward system has been used but the person has had to deal directly with the police.)

I would like to reemphasize that there is no common thread that identifies vandals and for the most part they are basically good kids, who for one reason or another, did an act of vandalism. It is important to deal with that.

Usually parents and students are very cooperative and appreciative. The students identified for vandalism are required to pay for the damage. If they do not have the money, they are given projects to work off the cost. There are certain aspects of the reward system which have become very pleasing to me. Students began to report acts of vandalism for such minor things as tearing pages out of books in our IMC or a prankish pulling of a fire alarm. Another important aspect is that we've never had a repeater. This reflects on how we deal with students. As long as we have had the reward system at LaFollette no student has ever tried to find out where we got our information. To the person reporting an incident, this is a big concern. Retaliation is feared. This has not happened!

Another area of the total program is cost analysis. We have found that it has been necessary to sophisticate the vandalism reporting system so that when repairs are made at the school, it is identified as vandalism or not vandalism. By doing this we get a time situation, location, and type of vandalism. Statistics have proven this to be a positive deterrent, also.

I think the committee has had a very positive impact on total school climate. LaFollette High School is 15 years old, with the largest student population in Madison. People who visit the school are amazed at its condition. Currently there are 100 students actively involved in the Vandalism Committee and the number of underclasspeople has increased each year--this speaks well for our visitation teams. One of the strategies used on a continuing basis is the attempt to keep

the subject of vandalism and school pride constantly in front of the students. This is done with posters, T-shirts, buttons, and special programs.

One of the ideas that has been very successful is to run a contest early in the school year asking for suggestions on what the Vandalism Committee can do. Whether or not students participate in this contest, the idea of student concern about vandalism is up front. We have had over 200 students respond with ideas. The Vandalism Committee picked the four or five best ideas and for them gave out tickets to rock concerts as prizes.

I guess it would be remiss on my part, after describing our program, not to mention some statistics, although I realize that statistics must be considered in context with many other variables. For example, one major break-in could skyrocket the cost. I would like to briefly summarize some statistics which, hopefully, have been affected by the efforts of the Vandalism Committee. In the second year that we were involved in the Vandalism Committee, we dropped 83 incidents--actual incidents of vandalism. In recently compiled cost summaries of vandalism throughout our entire school district for the 1978 school year, there are some interesting facts. The cost for vandalism at LaFollette was reduced to \$2,100 in 1978 with complete restitution. Our costs were thousands of dollars lower than those at the other three high schools in the District.

In summary, I would say that the important point of this article is that if you get students involved on a positive basis you can have a significant impact. I have no program to "sell," but my intent is to give some ideas for schools that want to institute programs of vandalism prevention. I will reaffirm my position that the Vandalism Committee activities, although geared toward combating vandalism, are also having some positive side effects. The activities encourage respect for property, promote positive citizenship and school pride, as well as improving the overall school climate.

PROJECT Community Organization Saves Taxes



**Madison Metropolitan
School District's
Student Committees
to reduce vandalism...**

Madison Metropolitan School District
Douglas S. Ritchie, Superintendent

History of Project C.O.S.T.

School vandalism is a nation-wide problem. It is conservatively estimated to cost the taxpayers \$600,000,000 per year. This staggering figure has prompted many school systems across the country to develop programs, hopefully, to relieve the needless destruction of property and expenditures of tax dollars.

Consequently, in 1974 the Board of Education and Superintendent of MMSD charged the LaFollette Attendance Area with the responsibility of developing model programs which would reduce the incidents of vandalism in our school system. Those found to be effective would be implemented in all the schools of the district.

With the cooperation of the University of Wisconsin, it was decided to approach the problem through active participation and involvement of interested high school students. The student council willingly accepted the challenge. Twelve workshop and training sessions with students, teachers, parents and administrators were scheduled and completed by the end of the first semester in 1975.

The content of this brochure briefly describes some of the projects which have had the greatest impact in reducing vandalism incidents and costs. Admittedly, continuous awareness and commitment are necessary to maintain effective preventive programs.

Project C.O.S.T. is actively supported by many departments and organizations in our city: Madison Police Dept., Dane Co. Environmental Council, Wis. State Hwy. Dept., U.W., TV and Radio Stations, Mayor and Common Council, Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, Madison Parks Commission, Juvenile Court, Governor's Office, Legislative personnel.



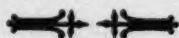
Superintendent Ritchie

Vandalism is defined as willful acts of destruction and mutilation to property not owned by the offenders.

There is no identified single cause which incites destructive behavior. But in most cases negative behavior can be changed if educationally sound programs are designed and implemented.

We in the Madison Metropolitan School District believe this to be true. Therefore, our student committees on vandalism have organized various programs which are aimed specifically at changing the attitudes of their peers and of the total community. Our thesis is that individuals must feel good about themselves before positive attitudes toward societal responsibilities become a pattern of natural behavior.

In reviewing the various activities in this brochure, you will notice that all are of a preventive nature. It is our hope that if Project C.O.S.T. continues to be successful and effective there will be less need for corrective type programs.





One of the most effective ways to curb vandalism in our schools and community is to involve students. They can participate in (1) planning vandalism prevention programs, (2) talking to their own age group about ways of reducing vandalism, and (3) appealing to all students to accept responsibility for preventing vandalism.

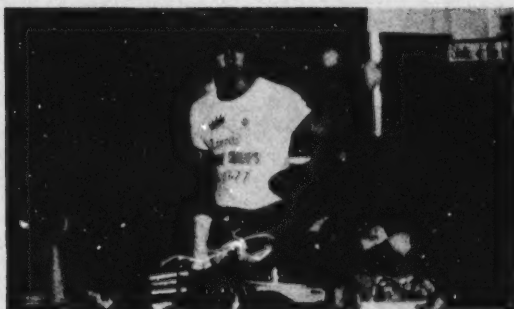
"Kids can stop vandalism" is a most appropriate theme for the vandalism prevention program in the Madison Metropolitan School District. Students are accepting responsibility for reporting information on acts of vandalism. Students are acting as official (as sometimes unofficial) hall monitors, and in this role commanding a high level of respect. They are proud to share their well-kept school building with the entire community.

While the student is the key, teachers and school administrators are also involved in the vandalism prevention effort. In a very special way these adults work with students to help them get involved and deliver their messages about vandalism prevention to younger children. These adults have also been the advisors on the creation of several public information messages. And above all, these adults have been "there" to encourage the students to continue their fine efforts, to thank the students for their contributions, and to recognize the students for their outstanding service to their school and community.

Ellen Meister

Director, Northeast District

STUDENTS COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS



A filmstrip with a discussion guide on vandalism in the Madison Metropolitan School District was developed. High school students go into elementary school classrooms and use the filmstrip guide. The guide provides open-ended questions whereby the students frankly discuss vandalism in the community's schools.

DEVELOP PRIDE IN SCHOOLS



A sense of pride for school buildings is developed. High school students orientate middle school students about their building as these middle school students will attend high school next year.



Middle school students designed a play about vandalism. They present it to younger students .

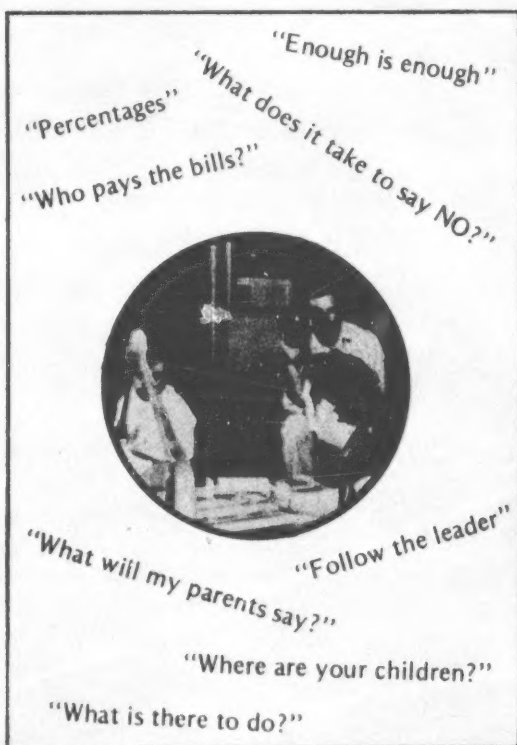
**PROJECT C.O.S.T.
Student Committee
On Vandalism**



**LaFollette High School
Madison, Wisconsin**

Vandalism Prevention and Awareness Are Promoted

The committee on vandalism, with the cooperation of the University of Wisconsin, filmed a series of vignettes about vandalism. The vignettes depict causes and effects of vandalism. The result has been greater community awareness of vandalism problems and prevention as the vignettes are being aired on all the local television stations as a public service. Vignettes are also available to all Madison schools.



Awareness and promotion of vandalism prevention are important. The LaFollette student committee on vandalism held a contest to obtain ideas to promote and advertise vandalism prevention. The following activities were developed and put into use:

- A series of anti-vandalism posters were designed and distributed to all of Madison's schools. Other posters were designed for advertisements for the city of Madison's bus system.



- Anti-vandalism bumper stickers as well as T-shirts and parking stickers were produced as everyday reminders to aid in anti-vandalism awareness.



- Radio public announcement tapes on vandalism prevention and awareness were read by local sports and entertainment personalities.
- High ranking state and local officials have participated and supported the activities of the LaFollette Area Student Committee on Vandalism.



"No one person or individual organization can do a great deal to curb incidents of vandalism in the city of Madison. To be effective, efforts must be combined. The program LaFollette High School students have undertaken to help with this problem should be commended. Their efforts combined with a total community awareness of the problem and willing to be involved should do a great deal to lessen vandalism in our community.

The LaFollette Area Community Communications Council learned that the number and cost of incidents of vandalism in the LaFollette Area have dropped steadily the last four years. One main reason for the reduction in acts of vandalism is the implementation of a special vandalism program which was started at LaFollette High School five years ago. The program attempts to teach students and the rest of the community about the causes and effects of vandalism and the ways to stop it."

Barbara Arnold, Member of the Steering
Committee of the L.A.C.C.C.
Parent Advisory Group



The student involvement on the vandalism committee has been amazing. This years committee has more than 90 members actively involved. The committee's work includes visitation to elementary and middle schools, special productions (T-shirts, posters, buttons, bumper stickers, etc), and AV productions - slides, films, vignettes. The school climate, citizenship and respect for property has improved tremendously as a result of the work of this committee. The results have carried over into many aspects of school life. This years committee is also involved in drug and alcohol prevention programs.

We can all be proud of the students on the vandalism committee. Vandalism is a national as well as local concern. Positive attitude and student involvement is needed to curb this waste. Hopefully the attitude will carry outside the school and help curb vandalism throughout society.

Glenn F. Borland
Principal, LaFollette High School

Student and Teacher Comment on Vandalism Prevention Programs

“As members of the student teams that visited the elementary schools, we feel our vandalism prevention program is very good.

When we went to the grade schools we tried to stress a personal approach to the problem of vandalism. We did this by showing the students how it affected them, and they took an interest in the problems of vandalism.

We have a great interest in our student program to stop vandalism. We believe this shows that our students feel vandalism is both stupid and useless. We hope to continue our work in the hope of someday halting vandalism.”

Scott Truehl, Student
LaFollette High School

“The activities and awareness programs developed by the LaFollette High School Committee on Vandalism have been very effective in our classrooms. Particularly effective is having high school students talking with elementary school students in the classroom. The aim here is to get the younger students more aware of vandalism as well as change attitudes and stop acts of vandalism before they happen.”

James Trochta, Teacher
Glendale Elementary School

Each School Community Has A Part !

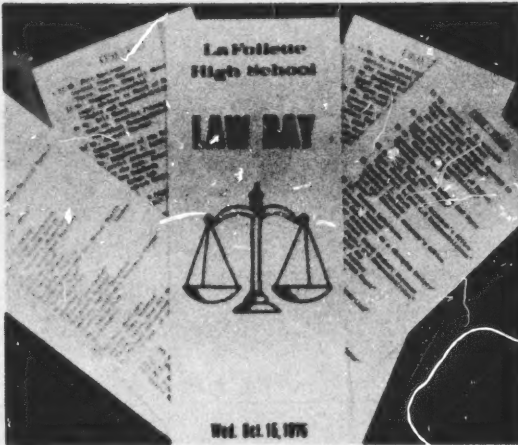


While the LaFollette Area schools, and particularly LaFollette High School, have initiated many of the sound directions for the vandalism prevention effort in the Madison Metropolitan School District, each elementary, middle and high school in the school district could report on special strategies and activities aimed at reducing vandalism.

Teams of teachers and other support staff from Gompers, Marquette, Sherman, and Schenk Middle School, and East High School have received special training on "Preventing and Reducing Crime and Disruptive Behavior in Schools." Each of these teams has developed a school action plan to impact on the key problems in that school. The action plans include student objectives as well as teacher inservice objectives. All building personnel and all the students are involved in these action plans; the keys are Concern about the Problem, Action to correct the problem, Responsibility to prevent the problem in the future and Enthusiasm for improving school climate.

For detailed information contact Dr. Ellen Meister, Director, Northeast District.

LAW DAY



Law Day at LaFollette High School was implemented, scheduled and organized by a student-faculty committee on vandalism. They brought together a group of prominent and knowledgeable individuals. Among them were high ranking state and local officials as well as judges, lawyers and other officials.

These individuals addressed the following objectives:

- (1) To increase in all students a knowledge of the impact that vandalism has on society in social, political and economic terms.
- (2) To increase in all students a knowledge of the law and the operation of the system of justice.

FACULTY

Glenn Borland, Principal LaFollette High School
Thomas Chritton, Teacher LaFollette High School
Bruce Swanson, Teacher LaFollette High School
James Trochta, Teacher - Glendale Elementary School

Detailed information is available by writing to:

Superintendent's Office
Madison Metropolitan School District
545 West Dayton Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
(Phone (608) 266-6235

or

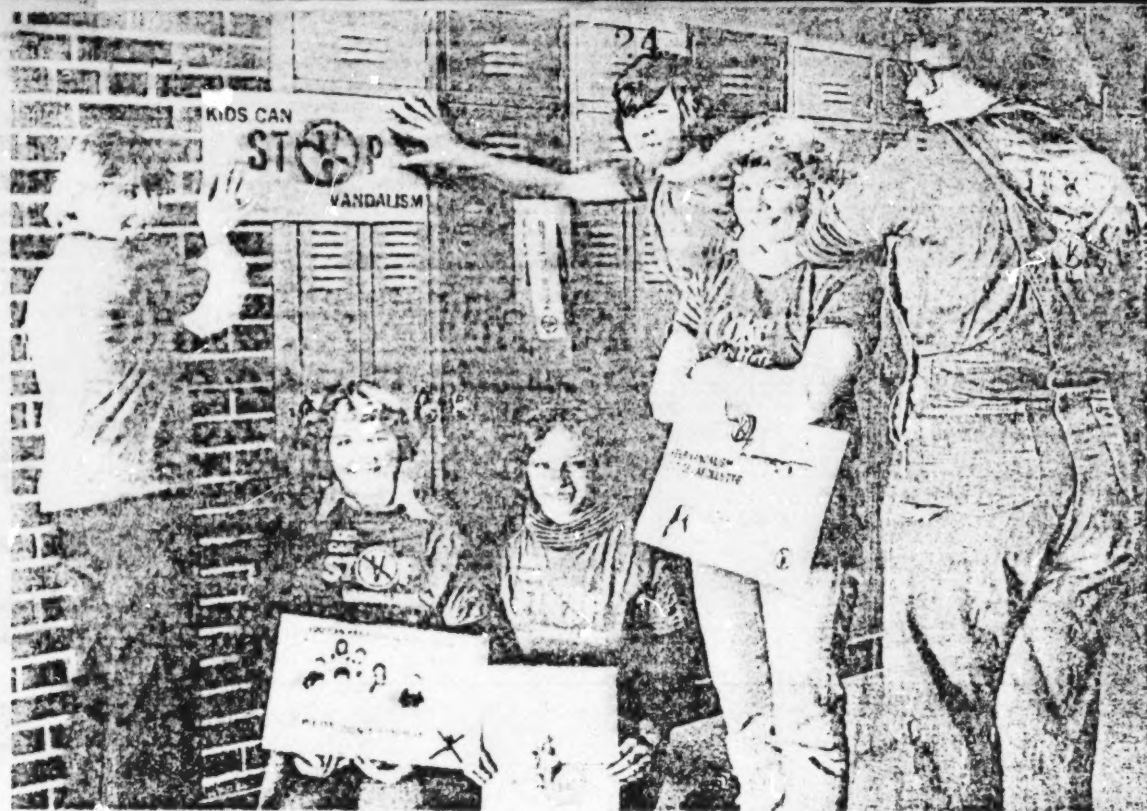
Mr. Glenn Borland
Principal
LaFollette High School
702 Pflaum Road
Madison, Wisconsin 53716
(Phone)(608) 222-0641)



22

Kids can stop Vandalism

23



Posters, T-shirts and cooperation from the student body is what is beating the vandalism problem at LaFollette High School. Among the 90-member student anti-vandal-

ism committee are, left to right, Barb Hedding, Laurie Lindeen, Lori DiLoreto, Scott Truehl, Sarah Hoeveler and Terrie Houser.

—State Journal Photo by Carolyn Pfisterer

LaFollette's anti-vandalism fight pays off for everyone

By Dianne Lynch
Of The State Journal

LaFollette High School is unique in a lot of ways.

The paintings on its walls are unmarred by the ugly scars of graffiti.

The carpeting in its library is unstained, and the soft furniture in its Commons area is as comfortable as the day it was put there.

All of its bathroom stalls have doors on them.

And nearly 100 of its students are involved in a program to stop vandalism in Madison schools.

The program has expanded from a small group of students and faculty who sat down together in 1975 to discuss the problem of vandalism into a full-scale campaign against destruction of school property.

The group couldn't find a common denominator to work from because there is no rhyme or reason for vandalism, according to Glenn Borland, who became LaFollette's principal that year.

"Vandals don't think," he explained to a reporter. "They don't really intend to vandalize, but they don't use judgment. A lot of it is peer pressure."

Undaunted, the members of the anti-vandalism committee decided the key to the problem would be an informed student population. They needed to get their message across, that "vandalism hurts everybody."

And now they are using every form of media to do it — from television to bumper stickers to buttons.

The students wrote and directed film vignettes about vandalism and distributed them for airing on local television stations.

They printed T-shirts, bumper stickers, buttons, signs for Madison taxis and buses, and posters bearing

LaFollette High School's Student Vandalism Committee will be acclaimed by Madison's Exchange Club at its banquet at the Cuba Club Thursday night for its work in crime prevention in the city.

A plaque in recognition "of outstanding effort and creativity displayed while promoting in its school and community an attitude of respect for all public and private property" will be presented to Scott Truehl, committee chairman, and Principal Glenn Borland, who will be the main speaker, as part of Crime Prevention Week activities of the club this year.

The Exchange Club nationally has promoted crime prevention since 1946 and the Madison club since its inception in 1948.

the newest anti-vandalism slogan — "Kids Can Stop Vandalism."

And they've started going out into city elementary schools, distributing their materials and showing their films. They've also been talking to their peers.

"Kids will listen to other kids," Borland observed.

Within LaFollette's own perimeter, the "climate" has improved, and the anti-vandalism program is beginning to pay off.

That "climate" means students are beginning to realize that vandalism is everybody's problem, and that reporting it is everybody's responsibility.

Borland has instituted a reward system at LaFollette, and students are paid between \$10 and \$20 for reporting information on vandalism.

"It took a while to catch on," Borland said. "We had to convince them they weren't being ratfinks — that everybody pays for vandalism when the offender isn't caught, and that's not fair."

"Now there's very little that goes on around here that we don't know about, and we are getting kids coming into the office reporting vandalism without asking for the reward," he added.

Borland said the way the school

chooses to deal with offenders has a lot to do with the high incidence of reporting.

"We don't treat offenders as bad kids," he said. "We treat their offense as an error in judgment, a stupid thing to do, something they'll have to pay for."

"We stress accountability and try to make it a learning experience."

And school officials handle the problem themselves, without assistance from Madison police.

"A student will turn in somebody if he knows it'll stay within the school, when they know the offender won't be getting a police record."

For whatever reason, LaFollette's anti-vandalism program has been a real success:

- ✓ During the program's first year, vandalism incidents at LaFollette decreased by 83 reports.

- ✓ Last year, every act of vandalism was reported.

- ✓ No suspect denied committing the act of vandalism.

- ✓ No suspect tried to learn the identity of the person who turned him in.

- ✓ No suspect repeated the offense.

- ✓ The school was reimbursed by offenders for all acts of vandalism during 1977.